Approved For Release 2003/04/29 : CIA-RDP84-00780R00400004001

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

Per request of Mr. Wattles, a copy of DD/S 71-1246 was forwarded to D/Pers and DTR, w/o Attachments.

Mr. Wattles talked on the intercom with said that he did send copies to MAG.

Mr. Wattles suggests that the attached be held pending outcome of planned MAG meeting about 28 or 29 April 71. Messrs. Fisher and Cunningham will represent DD/S.

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DD/S 71-1246

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Director-Comptroller

SUBJECT

: Management Advisory Group Recommendations

1. This memorandum is for your information.

- 2. On 26 March 1971, you sent through me to the Director of Training and the Director of Personnel, respectively, MAG papers dealing with the Career Training Program and the probationary period. While the two papers were principally the concern of the officers to whom they were forwarded, we felt that the other would each have some worthwhile comment to make, and we, therefore, presumed to make copies and requested such comment. Both the Director of Training and the Director of Personnel responded on the probationary paper. While only the Director of Training responded on the CT paper, the Director of Personnel advises me that discussed it with the head of the Program.
- 3. Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Fisher, in their papers which are attached, have taken essentially similar positions against the extension of the probationary period. Mr. Cunningham believes that the best way to respond on the CT issue is to discuss it with the MAG. I agree. Before that is done, however, we want to review the Program with Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Fisher. Mr. Wattles and I have some thoughts about it which we will discuss with them, following which panels being popular these days the four of us could meet with the MAG.
- 4. I think we must be concerned with the implications of the statements made by the MAG on both of these subjects. In the case of the CT paper, though we might agree with the conclusion, it is reached for the wrong reasons and, in fact, it appears that the MAG has drawn again on a good deal of misinformation. Indeed it is regrettable that, with access to Agency sources for facts, the Group did not do the simple research which would have obviated some of the assertions made. The basic

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fallacy of the MAG proposal on the probationary period is the old one of treating the symptoms rather than the disease. In essence, it proposes to transfer to some procedural mechanic — read "Panel" — the supervisory responsibility for forthright evaluation of employee performance and the courage to initiate remedial — including separation — action where it is evident that the individual is not going to be a satisfactory long term employee of the Agency. Such a shifting of responsibility — a depersonalizing of supervision — is neither sound nor healthy management. I would suggest that the failure of the new professional to develop properly in the early years is as frequently a failure by the Agency as by the employee.

25X1

John W. Coffey Deputy Director for Support

5 Atts

- Att 1: Basic MAG Memo dtd 25 Mar 71 for ExDir, subj: Recommendation on Lengthening the Employee Probationary Period
- Att 2: Basic MAG Memo dtd 25 Mar 71 for ExDir, subj: Recommendation that the CT Program Be Reexamined
- Att 3: Memo dtd 7 Apr 71 for ADD/S fr DTR re Att 1 listed above
- Att 4: Memo dtd 7 Apr 71 for DD/S fr D/Pers re Att 1 listed above
- Att 5: Memo dtd 2 Apr 71 for Ex. Dir.-Compt. fr DTR, subj: MAG Comments About the Career Training Program

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP

2 U MAR 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Executive Director

SUBJECT: Recommendation on Lengthening the Employee Probationary

Period

CIA officers enjoy, in fact if not in theory, virtually unparalleled job security. They do not face the service officers' maximum time-in-grade hurdles nor the periodic competitive weeding out FSO's undergo.

There is one time only in his career when the inept CIA employee faces any real prospect of discharge: during his first or probationary year. Having survived 365 days, he is safe against all but the grossest offenses against security, decorum, or the law.

The Agency, traditionally very chary of exercising the DCI's statutory authority to make summary dismissals, has only proved willing to discharge the inept or miscast employee during his probationary year. In the last five years an average of professional-level employees (or $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ of all new employees) were so separated each year. In contrast, virtually none were discharged during this five years after their probationary periods had been completed.

The Agency seems content, and perhaps is morally obligated, to carry to retirement eligibility the formerly able officer who peaked after 15 years and is coasting. It correctly feels no similar obligations to the new officer who usually has minimal family obligations and a minuscule investment of tenure in his intelligence career.

GROUP I
Excluded from automatic
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Despite the best of screening aids, hiring mistakes are inevitable. Many new employees themselves recognize mistaken career choices, and the greatest percentage of resignations in Agency professional ranks occur during the first five years of employment.

The Agency gives itself only a year to recognize and correct such hiring mistakes. MAG believes this time is clearly too short. CT's are still in training status when the year has expired (and are often receiving protective performance evaluations and "extra help" from their counselors.) PTP officers are still busily indexing documents in RID and dreaming of a future CS career. CS careerists can be evaluated fully only on their field performance, and few are lucky enough to escape desk servitude within a year.

MAG finds cumbersome, unnecessary, and possibly disadvantageous the suggestion of hiring new employees under contract. The paperwork is unnecessary, and the Agency's primary recruiting theme - "a career in intelligence" - becomes a bit hollow when followed by a contract offer with the standard 30-day notice clause. Adoption of such a practice would undoubtedly put us at a hiring disadvantage.

The contract suggestion rests in fact on recognition that Agency management has grown accustomed to letting contracts lapse but has shied away from firing staffers. It is thus in essence a dodge to circumvent traditional attitudes and practices.

Why not, instead, change practice? There is no statutory bar to CIA's setting any probationary period it wishes for new employees. MAG advocates adopting a five-year probationary period, with rigorous, competitive weeding-out hazards to be faced at the end of the third and fifth years.

This proposal parallels roughly the Macomber task force recommendations for fairly ruthless competitive selection out of less promising junior FSO's. It assumes that marginality can be detected fairly early in a career. (There is good

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evidence for this, in, among other places, the results of the CS evaluation panels.) It assumes that surgery is better and more humane early in a career than later. It holds the promise of fewer career misfits and of fewer future cuts in the established officer corps. It permits us to risk a greater infusion of new blood.

MAG advocates competitive ranking of new employees in each directorate and the automatic discharge at the end of three years of the lowest 10% and at the end of five years of another 5%. (There is nothing sacrosanct about the percentage cuts recommended but we think their logic can be supported. The CS Evaluation Boards are having little difficulty identifying a marginal 5% at each grade among more senior officers and we think the rationale of a probationary period argues for more rigorous pruning then than at mid-career.)

We suggest this procedure because the firing decision is always a painful one. No "sensible" supervisor wants to document the record, write the fateful recommendation, nor face down an irate employee. It is easier to try to palm off a marginal employee on another shop. The fixed percentage requirement avoids all this and ensures that the non-competitive officer is impartially identified and acted against. The two-stage procedure should permit some career experimentation and the rehabilitation of employees possibly miscast in one directorate but entirely competitive in another.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP

25 March 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Executive Director

SUBJECT: Recommendation that the CT Program Be Re-examined

MAG thinks there is good evidence that the CT Program may have outlived its usefulness.

Two years ago a panel of senior CS officers unanimously concluded that the CT program was too seldom producing the sort of officer needed by the CS. CT selection standards emphasized academic excellence; the CS wanted operational acumen. The CT program was producing a bureaucratic elite; the CS wanted case officers. Last fall several divisions in the CS offered to forego their "CT quotas" in exchange for freedom to hire directly themselves an equivalent number of new officers off the street.

Several years ago the CT program was training 225 officers annually and was the "normal" route in for new officers. Today it is inducting fewer than 50 officers yearly, far fewer than are hired directly or promoted from the ranks to professional status. The danger of elitism, always present in the CT program, has been considerably heightened. Disgruntlement is atypically high among CT's and resignations frequent; the feeling of being among the chosen leads to exaggerated expectations and subsequent disillusionment. Many CT's expect quick advancement and good assignments simply because "they are superior."

GROUP I
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

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Approved For Release 2003/04/29: CIA-RDP84-00780R00400040011-4

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The shrunken CT program leaves us with an expansive and expensive training facility and an instructor-to-student ratio that exceeds 3:1.

To witness ennui at its acme, one need only address a CT class in the final week or two of their year-long training. This heavy "front-end loading" of CIA training violates sound learning principles. Compare the State Department's carefully considered proposals in "Diplomacy for the Seventies" for periodic training ties to level of responsibility and next job assignment.

OTR's staff and schedule is virtually enslaved to the CTP cycle. OTR was established to serve the Agency's total training needs yet finds it difficult to meet specific training requirements because it is committed to a fixed schedule for 50 CT's a year.

CT selection standards have varied widely with the availability of candidates. The July 1971 CT course will include several internal nominees who were rejected twice previously for CT status in days of easier outside recruitment. It will also include several internals for whom the CT training will be largely redundant but for whom the CT route is one of the few doors left open to staff status in these days of tight T/O's.

In these times of restricted hiring when obtaining quality new blood is at a premium, it seems contradictory to allow the CTP first pick of all applicant write-ins and the consequent ability to determine what sort of case officers DDP will get and what kind of analyst DDI may acquire. With so few to be hired, might not the hiring decisions best be shared with the officers most directly affected?

MAG would like to see hiring decisions decentralized and shared with the directorates, and training, save for a brief orientation course, tied to job progression in each career service.

7 April 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Deputy Director for Support

SUBJECT

Comments and Observations on the

Proposal of the Management Advisory Group to Lengthen the Employee Pro-

bationary Period

REFERENCE

Note to DTR from A/DDS dtd 29 Mar '71,

same subject

- l. Lengthening the probationary period for new employees to five years and subjecting them to a "rigorous, competitive weeding-out... at the end of the third and fifth years" would not be of any significant value to the Office of Training in pruning its rolls of unsuitable or unsatisfactory personnel. Except for Career Trainees, most professional requirements are filled through conversion of officers from other career services and through the rotational tours of experienced personnel. During the last five years approximately 15 professional people were obtained through external recruitment. Accordingly, the majority of OTR staff officers have been with the Agency well beyond five years. The present one-year probationary period is entirely adequate for evaluating the suitability of new clerical employees who are assigned to OTR from the Office of Personnel at an average rate of seven per year.
- 2. The MAG proposal would probably have a depressing effect on recruiting people into the Agency, especially if they are told (and they should be) that an offer of permanent employment is subject to the satisfactory completion of a five-year probationary period. As it applies to the Career Trainee, I think it is too long. The average age

of the CT at present is 27. The prospect of being automatically eliminated at age 32 on the basis of competitive rankings and fixed percentages would not likely be considered an attractive proposition. I believe that selection procedures currently in force sufficiently guarantee that our CTs have all the necessary qualities and background for success in the Agency. Where failure occurs, it is often explained in terms of the individual not having received the right amount of direction, guidance, supervision, and training during his developmental years. Occasionally, outside factors, such as family problems, show up early or late in his career and affect his performance and flexibility in regard to assignments.

- Speaking of Career Trainees, I want to correct and comment on a statement made in paragraph 6 which says that CTs often receive "protective performance evaluations" and "extra help" from their counselors. There is no policy or other directive existing in OTR which advocates the assignment of "protective" ratings (false, padded, inaccurate?) on CTs. To my knowledge, there never has been a practice of this kind. Further, Program Officers of the Career Training Staff encourage the utmost candor in reports prepared on the CT by component supervisors during interim assignments of the young officer. Whether or not this is done conscientiously, of course, lies beyond the control of OTR. I am not certain what is precisely meant by the term "extra help" except to note that Program Officers, or counselors, are obligated to help the new CT with his problems, official and personal, whenever they are asked to do so, and if appropriate. This function is quite identical to that of the duty of the supervisor during the early stages of any other employee's career. There is simply no one else to do the job, and, in a real sense, the Program Officer is the CT's supervisor. It would be unthinkable not to offer this basic service to a new employee.
- 4. Perhaps a fuller explanation would clarify the implications of the last sentence in paragraph 11 which reads: "The CS Evaluation Boards are having little difficulty identifying a marginal 5% at each grade among more senior officers and we think the rationale of a probationary period argues for more rigorous pruning then, than at midcareer." From the statement, I do not quite see how it can be concluded that a "rigorous pruning" during the five-year probational phase will substantially reduce (?) or eliminate (?) the need for such action in the middle time of an officer's career. This conclusion

presumes that nearly everything detrimental to success will manifest itself during the early years. This would be an ideal situation, but I am not sure we can rely on it totally even though the limited experience of the CS Evaluation Panels seems to have produced some justification for this method (pp. 2-3). In any event, why leave the job to a panel when supervisors and career service heads should be examining the records of all newcomers on a continuing basis? Though such a review would uncover some potential misfits, it still does not come to grips with the problem mentioned in paragraph 4 of the MAG memo -- that of the officer who has ''peaked-out' at his mid-career point.

- I am disturbed by the line of reasoning set forth in paragraph 12 as justification for establishing a separation program founded on intensive competitive rankings and fixed-percentage cuts at the end of three and five-year periods. Granting that this approach might be the one to use, it should be applied for the right reasons -- that it is the fairest, most efficient, and most accurate, not that it relieves the supervisor of the distasteful chores of ''documenting the record, writing the fateful recommendation, facing-down an irate employee, "or "palming him off on another office." It is conceivable that a system such as the one advocated in paragraph 12 would not promote good management practices. Primarily, it is oriented toward helping the supervisor to avoid his on-going responsibility to evaluate the employee candidly and take whatever action is necessary at the time, including the preparation of unfavorable Fitness Reports and the accompanying warning letter. The tendency could well foster an attitude of "let the panel do it." I also think that deferral of action to three and five-year periods would have the unpleasant effect of focusing attention, internal and possibly public, on the release of relatively large numbers of employees at the same time.
- 6. I doubt if a five-year period of probation is needed to evaluate every professional employee. Something like that amount of time might be necessary in the Clandestine Service, considering the time required for training, Headquarters exposure, and an overseas tour. It certainly should be less for some research and analytical jobs in the Intelligence and in the Science and Technology Directorates. I wouldn't need five years to assess the abilities of an instructor in OTR. Accordingly, the adoption of a five-year trial period throughout the Agency would not be realistic. The Organization would probably end up with more than one set of probational standards.

- 7. The solution to many of the problems outlined in the MAG paper are already available. In two words it adds up to "vigilant management." The following points are relevant:
 - a. Retain the one-year probationary period. It is entirely adequate for evaluating clerical employees and possibly other special categories of personnel. As stated in paragraph 3 of the MAG paper it succeeded in eliminating [2.5%] of the professionals. Possibly, Management should encourage that even greater emphasis should be placed on evaluating employees during this period. OTR training programs could be of further help in achieving this objective.
 - b. Continue to stress the fact that Fitness Reports must record absolutely accurate evaluations of employee performance and that this is a supervisory obligation, not an option. The uniform application of this elementary principle of good management would eliminate the need for procedures like the ones outlined in the MAG paper: it deals with the problem as it arises and on its own merits. OTR can help here also.
 - c. Employ more diligently and extensively the review procedures prescribed by As you know, these regulations require that at the end of the three-year provisional period the Head of the Career Service must "... carefully evaluate the individual's suitability for selection as a Career Employee. .." The regulation also establishes procedures for handling a recommendation that the employee's Career-Provisional appointment be terminated. Obviously, the various career services have not used this means of separating employees unfit for, uninterested in, or unable to assume the responsibilities and obligations of Agency employment. Perhaps a directive or instruction from top management is necessary to activate this little used regulation.

HUGH T. CUNNINGHAM
Director of Training

Attachment
MAG Recommendation

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7 APR 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Support

SUBJECT : Recommendation on Lengthening the Employee Probationary

Period

REFERENCE : Memo for ExDir-Compt fr MAG dtd 25 March 1971, same subject

- 1. We do not agree with the recommendation that the employee probationary period be lengthened. Nor do we believe that an arbitrary number of employees should be separated at the end of three- and five-year periods.
- 2. The MAG recommendation rests on assumptions about the nature of the work force and Agency management which are highly questionable and, if implemented as presented, could have a seriously adverse effect upon professional recruitment and the morale of our young professionals.
- 3. MAG's first assumption seems to be that we <u>need</u> a mandatory weeding out of 14 to 15% of new professionals in a five-year period. Add to this a certain number of professional employees who will go each year through normal attrition--currently at an all-time low of 5.6% per year--and we could conceivably encounter an unacceptable loss rate. Other assumptions or implications which we question include:
 - a. Present recruitment and selection procedures are wrong about 15% of the time; possibly so, but we are not prepared to grant it.
 - b. Agency management lacks the courage to identify and eliminate misfits; and "the fixed percentage requirement avoids all this and ensures that the non-competitive officer is impartially identified and acted against." We do not concede the first point, and the track record in the "701" and other ranking exercises suggests at least a reasonable doubt as to the second.
- 4. On the positive side, we do agree that our career selection process must be improved. We have available the policies, regulations and procedures which can accomplish the MAG objectives and can achieve them within an existing framework. As you know from our discussions of this subject, we do not believe these important screening procedures have been used adequately and we are well along in our planning to improve the effectiveness of this program.

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Provisional appointees to Career Employand have not been changed since they we 1961. At that time the Director annous strengthen existing career concepts and of a strong Career Service in the Agent practices since then have fallen short distinction between Career Provisional example, of approximately employed career Provisional status and were conthe last three calendar years, all but status and action on those was deferred statistics have been kept on resignating activities, the Chief, Special Activitionly a few employees leave the Agency screening.	yee status are formalizere approved by the DCI need that they were intended to foster the continucy. There is no doubt of this intent to estate and Career Employee stes who completed three sidered for Career Emplay were converted to Cd. None were terminate ons related to career sies Staff confirms our	ed in25X1 in September ended to ing evolution that our blish a real atus. For years in oyee status during areer Employee d. Although no election impression that
6. Although the basic concepts is evident need to strengthen the whole management tool and to make the prosper status of greater significance to the apparent that we must depend for the mattitudinal changes to accomplish these discussions with the OGC and others, we improve the career selection process anticipation of the increased emphasis career status at the end of the three-pappropriate statement in the remarks of We have also prepared a list of other aquite ready to be forwarded for your agas Tab B, but without the supporting deto the MAG that we are serious about in at the end of the three-year provisions.	e career selection oper ct of conversion to Car individuals concerned. ost part upon psycholog e improvements. From o e conclude that certain ignificantly. Some mon we plan to give to the year provisional period ection of our Form 1150 actions which are almost pproval. We have attacoumentation, only to perform the career selection of the career selections.	eer Employee It is also ical and ur review and actions would ths ago, in conversion to , we added an (see Tab A). t but not yet hed this list rovide assurance
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Harry B. Fisher Director of Personnel

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A. Revise as proposed in Tab A. This would emphasize the importance of the entire three-year provisional period as a screening process. It would also clarify the special meaning of the first year trial period and the delegation of authority to the Director of Personnel to affect separation of employees during that period.

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B. Revise as proposed in Tab B to require that Fitness Reports be prepared annually for all employees in Career Provisional status on their completion of 9, 24, and 33 months of service. The change would also require that all such reports contain a specific statement as to:

- (1) the employee's suitability for continued service; and,
- (2) his potential for conversion to Career Employee status.

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- C. Revise as proposed in Tab C to cover the delegation of authority to the Director of Personnel to terminate those employees who fail to satisfactorily complete the initial one-year trial period.
- D. Publish an OPM as proposed in Tab D announcing the involvement of the central Office of Personnel substantively in the career selection process by having the appropriate placement officers of the Staff Personnel Division
 - (1) review the Fitness Reports of all Career Provisional employees; and,
 - (2) personally discuss performance, work attitudes, and career interests with those Career Provisional employees who are available for interview each year and as appropriate with the supervisory and Career Service officials concerned.
- E. As soon as practicable arrange for Fitness Reports and Forms 1150 prepared on Career Provisional Employees to be recorded on paper of a distinctive color in order to further highlight the distinction between Career Provisional and Career Employee status.

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Director-Comptroller

SUBJECT

: MAG Comments About the Career

Training Program

- 1. The comments received from the Management Advisory Group about the Career Training Program are interesting and provocative. Unfortunately, some of the Group's conclusions apparently are based on inaccurate and misleading information.
- 2. In the interest of conserving the Group's time, as well as OTR's, I propose that I and Chief, CTP, brief and discuss with the Group all aspects of the Career Training Program. Perhaps with a better understanding of the Program, the Group could then offer some helpful suggestions for the selection and recruitment of young professional officers.

HUGH T. CUNNINGHAM
Director of Training

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